THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA) : (a) The Central Water Commission has not given clearance to Telugu Ganga Project so far.

(b) The State Government of Andhra Pradesh has been able to sort out inter-state issues.

(c) and (d) The Project will be cleared by the Union Government as soon as the inter-state issues are resolved.

Operation of Foreign Airlines to Calcutta

1788. SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY :
SHRI MEHBOOB ZAHEDI :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have approached any foreign airlines to operate international flight from Calcutta Airport in the interest of the Eastern and North East States during the last two years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the difficulties to divert some international flights from Delhi and Mumbai to Calcutta;

(d) whether any steps have been initiated in that direction;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, reasons for the dealy?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) to (f) The Government of India is offering various incentives to foreign airlines to operate to Calcutta, like the ability to combine Calcutta with other prime gate-ways, liberal fifth freedom rights, liberal terms of commercial agreements etc. During 1996-97, Calcutta has been offered as a point of call to the designated airlines of Armenia, Switzerland, Slovak Republic and Indonesia. Australia was granted facility to combine Calcutta with Delhi or Mumbai with effect from 16.10.96. The actual operations are, however, left to the commercial judgement of the airlines.

Direct Flight from Calicut to Mumbai

1789. SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any direct flight from Calicut to Mumbai domestic airport operated by Indian Airlines;

(b) if not, the reasons for not operating such flight;

(c) whether the Government are aware that domestic passengers are put to difficulties since the Calicut-Mumbai flight operated by Indian Airlines is landing at Sahara International Airport;

(d) whether the private Airlines operating on this sector is flying with full capacity;

(e) whether it is true that certain officials in the Indian Airlines are colluding with private airlines to scuttle I.A. operation from Calicut to Mumbai Domestic Airport; and

(f) if so, the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Due to aircraft capacity constraints, Indian Airlines is not in a position to introduce a direct flight from Calicut to Mumbai domestic airport.

(c) Indian Airlines has not received any complaint/ representation regarding the difficulties being faced by the passengers.

(d) The average seat factor of Jet Airways on Calicut-Mumbai sector during the month of June, 1997 is 85.9%.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

Direct Flight between Chennai and New York

1790. SHRI A.G.S. RAM BABU : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any long pending demand to introduce direct flight between Chennai and New York; and

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government thereto and the reasons for the delay in operating the said flight?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) Requests are received from time to time for introduction of direct flights from Chennai to New York.

(b) Air India operates one flight from Chennai to New York as a through flight with change of aircraft in Mumbai. One more flight offers an immediate connection to New York over Mumbai. On both these flights, Customs and Immigration formalities can be completed at Chennai. Air India also provides three other connections per week between Chennai and New York over Mumbai. Air India will consider operation of direct flights between Chennai and New York, depending upon availability of additional capacity and commercial and operational viability.

Conservation of Temples

1791. SHRI MEHBOOB ZAHEDI : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received representations about conservation of a group of temples at village Pathra in the district of Midnapore, West Bengal;